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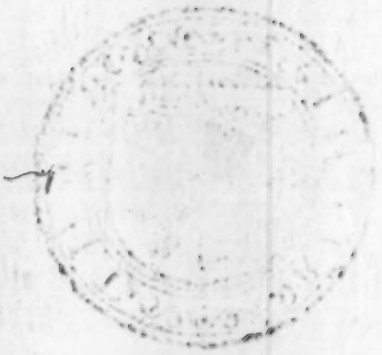
# MOTIVES TO INDUCE THE PROTESTANT PRINCES

*to mind the worke of peace Ecclesiasticall amongst themselves:*

Glos. *in Eccles.* 21.

Concordia minimæ res crescunt,
Discordia maximæ dilabuntur.

Printed in the yeare 1639.



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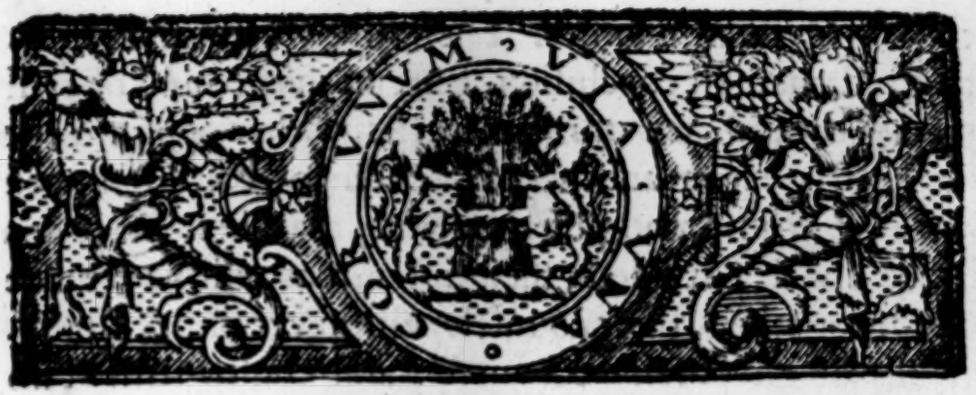

# MOTIVES TO INDUCE THE PROTESTANT PRINCES *to mind the vvorke of peace Eccleſiaſticall amongſt themſelves:*

THE firſt is if Proteſtants be not reconciled together, it will be impoſſible to prevent the utter ruine of their Churches, and overthrow of their ſtates in Germanie. For the maxime of ſtates which Chriſt teacheth, is infallible. Every kingdome (ſaith he) divided againſt it ſelfe, is brought to nought. And every city or houſe divided againſt it ſelfe, ſhall not ſtand.

Whence then the Apoſtles inference followeth, and is found by experience dolefully true That when wee bite and devoure one another, we ſhall (if wee take not heed)

be consumed one of another. Therefore wee must lay this for a fundamentall conclusion. Except the ground of evill (which is the distance of mens spirits, either opposite, or estrangerd one from another for matters of Religion) bee taken away from amongst Protestants, that their affections will bee alwaies divided, their intentions will never bee brought together, their counsels will never either fundamentally or effectually concurre, and consequently, no confederation nor conjunction in reall endeavours, will ever be brought to any purpose amongst them. And without this, I may freely say, that there is no humane appearance of any safety for the state of Protestants in Germany.

2 In the second place, it is evidently knowne. That the house of Austria, doth settle a forme of governement in the Empire conformable to the *Spanish Maximes of state*, which will introduce a most absolute and unlimited power of the *Emperour* over all the free *states and Princes in Germanie*, that when hee shall bee able to command the strength of that vast body at his owne will, he may be able by it, to conquer the rest of the *Europian states*, and so erect his intended Monarchie.

Which because nothing can so much hinder, as the publique profession of the Protestant religion; therefore they have concluded a totall extirpation thereof, together with the impoverishing and desolation of the Protestant states. To which effect these meanes have been, and are still practized.

1 All is done that can be done, to keepe the Protestant Princes, & great houses in perpetuall divisions one against another within the Empire.

2 The

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2 The ſtate of Religion *ſub utraque* in Bohemia, hath been perſecuted, together with the ſtrength of the Protector thereof, the *Prince Elector Palatine*.

3 The Schiſme of the Churches amongſt the others Proteſtants, hath been carefully fomented not only by the practiſe of unconſcionable divines, who have beene hired to maintaine the pretences of a fundamentall difference betwixt the Reformed and the *Luteran Religion*, with in-ſubſtance are but all one. But alſo by the eſtabliſhment of priviledges and promiſes made unto the Lutherans alone, that the Reformed being excluded from the ſame, the occaſion of envie and diſputes, ſhould never bee wanting amongſt them, no leſſe for wordly, then for ſpirituall cauſes.

4 Laſtly all poſſible endeavours, have been uſed to keep of a reall concurrence of intentions, betwixt forraigne ſtates, & the Princes of Germanie, leaſt they ſhould be ſupported with military aſſiſtance, as in a commun cauſe they ought to be.

These being the meanes, by which Proteſtants are now extremly weakened, the *Auſtrians* will be able in proceſſe of time to overthrow the ſame quite, & gaine all their own ends, if no courſe be taken to worke againſt them.

And to do this, no way will ever be effectuall, either to ſtop their proceedings, and to preſerve theſe remnants, and recover the loſſes, but that which is moſt fit to unite the ſpirits of Proteſtants amongſt themſelves. And nothing ſo fit to doe this as the compoſition of their differences about Religion, which have occaſioned all theſe diſtractions, for which the houſe of *Auſtria* hath hitherto prevailed.

3 The firſt ground and foundamentall occaſion of this warre is the matter of Religion, in reſpect it is different from Popery: For wee know that hereupon the quarrell did firſt ariſe, & now we ſee that the *Auſtrians* reeſtabliſh the ſame in all places which they conquer hence then it followeth, that the cauſe will be quite loſt, and in effect given over. If once the firſt intention of mainteining the ſtate of Religion be laid aſide. If the work of *Eccleſiaſticall reconcilement* (without with the publique profeſſion of religion cannot well ſtand) be not aimed at and proſecuted, as it ought to be.

4 Seeing God hath honoured moſt of the Proteſtant Princes, and chiefly the Palatine houſe to ſuffer thus much, and to bee brought thus low, for the cauſe of Religion, which is moſt put at.

Therefore we may firmely conclude, that hee will raiſe againe the Palatine houſe, and the other Princes which have ſuffered for his Churches ſake, if they leave not the cauſe: For it is certain that he will at laſt raiſe his Church, becauſe it is impoſſible that ſhe ſhould fall ſo, as to lie for ever. Now when this ſhall come to paſſe, then he will alſo reeſtabliſh thoſe that have ſuffered for the ſame, and have remained faithfull unto him conſtantly unto the end. And although they ſhould faile him, yet he cannot deny himſelfe or be failing to his owne cauſe.

But in a caſe of their failing away (as *Mordecai* ſaid to *Eſther 4. 13, 14. deliverance* will be wrought another way, becauſe Gods worke depends not upon the counſels and endeavours of men, but ſuch as hee pleaſeth to make uſe of, for his ſervice depends upon the iſſue of his worke.

Therefore

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Therefore if ever he raiſeth the houſe *Palatine*, and other Princes againe, hee will certainly uſe no other meanes to doe it, but the matter of Religion, for which they have ſuffered. And indeed in all humaine appearance, it is impoſſible, that the houſe *Palatine* can hence forth be in any ſafety and ſplendor without the reſtabliſſement of Religion.

For to ſpeake rationally, there is no humane appearance of poſſibility, that it ſhould receive any powerfull ſupport from any, nor can it expert credit or eſtimation by any, but from, and by thoſe, that are now in the ſame caſe with it ſelf, who by reaſon of their oppoſition to the houſe of *Auſtrias* power, and prevailing intentions, muſt reſolve to ſtand and fall together with it.

Therefore if the Proteſtant Princes intend their owne reſtitution and preſervation, they muſt needs alſo intend the reeſtabliſhment and conſervation of the reformed Churches in *Germany*. And ought as I ſuppoſe, to make this intention no leſſe a fundamentall reaſon of ſtate in all their conjoint or ſeverall proceedings, then the houſe of Auſtria maketh the oppoſite intention *fundamentall* unto it ſelfe.

And to doe this, there is none other way ſo likely, or ſo ſure to doe good, or ſo ſafe without danger, or ſo lawfull and laudable before God and man, as this is, of procuring a reconcilement of differences in Religion, that the body and caſes of all Proteſtants being made one and the ſame, their unity may be their ſtrenght, & their Religion may bee their preſervation: becauſe God hath promiſed, that when we ſhall ſeeke firſt his kingdom, and the righte-

ouſneſſe

ouſneſſe thereof, that then all other things ſhall be added unto us.

5 The leaders of a weake partie, cannot bee otherwiſe ſupported, then in making themſelves conſiderable by winning the affections and hearts of the common people. And to doe this, nothing is more fit in its owne nature, or at this time more ſeaſonable, then, to undertake and follow out the cauſe of Religion, in a way which is unbleameable, tending to brotherly love and reconciliation.

6 A generall peace is ſued for, but except this unity of Proteſtants amongſt themſelves be really taken to heart it is not like that ever it will be obteined, or beeing granted, ſafely and inviolably kept.

But if this buiſineſſe can once be brought unto ſome perfection, no doubt but it will daunt the Auſtrians more, then any thing which can bee attempted, and conſequently will bee a greater meanes of peace then any things els.

7 To oppoſe the *Auſtrians* and *Papall deſignes* againſt Proteſtants, no courſe more rationall and effectuall can be deviſed, then to croſſe the intentions of thoſe counſells, whereby they get their greateſt advantages. Seeing therefore that it is moſt cleere, that their chiefeſt advantages ariſe from the diviſion of *Proteſtants* amongſt themſelves, for matters of Religion, it followeth that no courſe can be taken in hand more fit to oppoſe them, then to beale theſe breaches, whereby they have prevailed.

8 Laſtly God doth require thoſe whome hee hath eſtabliſhed in places of eminent authority, that they ſhould

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bee carefull to imploy themſelves and make uſe of their eminency in his ſervice. Now his ſervice is nothing els, but to doe good to the myſticall body of his ſonne Jeſus Chriſt, which is his Church. For all the dignity which is beſtowed upon men, is given to this end, that Gods kingdome may bee advanced in their greatneſſe.

Therefore this duty is to be taken to heart, not only for wordly reaſons, but alſo for conſcience ſake, as being an obligation laid by God upon the places of great men. For ſuch as are honoured by God with the firſt places above all other men, are obliged reciprocally to honour him in the firſt places of their thoughts, which if they doe, hee hath promiſed to add more honour unto them.

Thoſe that honour me (ſaith the Lord) I will honour, and he that deſpiſeth mee, ſhall bee lightly eſteemed. To this purpoſe then, the words of the *Prophet Azariah*, 2 *Chron.* 15.2,3,4,5,6,7, *ſpoken to king Aſah*, may bee at this time fitly applyed to all *Proteſtant Princes*. Heare mee (ſaith he) *Aſah and all Iudah and Benjamin*. The Lord is with you while yee be with him, and if yee ſeeke him, he will be found of you, if yee forſake him, he will forſake you. Now for a long ſeaſon Iſrael hath beene without the true God, and without a teaching Prieſt, and without law. But when they in their trouble did turne unto the Lord God of Iſrael, and ſought him, he was found of them. And in thoſe daies there was no peace, to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexation were upon all the inhabitants of the country, and nation was deſtroied of nation, and city of city. For God did vex them with all adverſities. Be ye ſtrong therefore, and let not your hands

bee weake, for your worke ſhall bee rewarded.

Theſe are the words of the Prophet. From whehce wee obſerve, That when the afflictions of the Church are greateſt, then the opportunitie of working, and gaining a full reward is moſt ſeaſonable.

Therefore this is a duty unto with all Proteſtants Princes and ſtate men are bound, not only for reaſons of ſtate, but alſo by reaſon of conſcience, for this is the only thing that God doth regard in all men, namely what they intend to do for conſcience unto him. For if we ſerve God for other ends, then for himſelfe, althongh wee doe his worke, yet it is not thanks worthy, neither can a bleſſing upon any other undertaking be hoped for, except this buiſineſſe alſo be heartily intended.

For God that ſeeth the hearts, doth bleſſe men according to their ſecret intentions towards himſelfe, which hee knoweth beſt. God is juſt, and as wee deale with him, ſo he deales with us, with the pure, he ſheweth himſelf pure, and with the froward, he ſheweth himſelf froward, and doth reward every man according to the cleaneſſe of his hands in his eye ſight. Let us look to *David*, he did proſper, becauſe God was with him, And why was God with him? Becauſe his heart was with God in uprightneſſe. He teſtifieth himſelf that this was the cauſe of his deliverances. *Pſal.* 18. 16, *till* 27.

And afterwards when hee was come to the kingdome. What care had he to bring Gods Arke into this city. Nay what zeale had hee for the houſe of God, that it might bee built, when hee made a ſolemne vow never to reſt, till hee knew the place, which God would appoint for the building

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of it: And this was that which God regarded in him, and rewarded. For hee had no ſooner intended to build an houſe unto God, but God revealeth his intention towards him, that hee would eſtabliſh his throne and houſe for ever.

Thus then God is a faithfull maſter to faithfull ſervants, and rewardeth carefully all good endeavours taken up for his name ſake. Therefore it is certeine, hee will be mindfull of thoſe, that minde his Church, hee will honour thoſe that honour his cauſe, he will have good intentions towards thoſe, that meane uprightly with him, and hee will invincibly mainteine ſuch, as by ſuffering for him, have mainteined the truth of the Goſpel. From all which conſiderations we may thas conclude, that except the worke of *Eccleſiaſticall* reconcilement bee ſeriouſly intended, all theſe evills will follow.

Firſt the Proteſtant Churches and ſtates overthrow will bee inevitable in Germany.

Secondly the Auſtrian abſolute governement, will take effect over it.

Thirdly the true cauſe for which the war was undertaken will be quite deſerted.

Fourthly the ſufferings of the Proteſtant Princes will be (which God forbid) remedileſſe, and the ſtate thereof irrecoverable.

Fifthly the affections of all men will decay, and bee loſt from the Leaders of the cauſe.

Sixtly a generall peace will never either bee obteined, or kept inviolable.

Seavently the Auſtrian, and Papall deſignes will not bee directly oppoſed.

Eightly and laſtly; the chief duty to which all Proteſtant Princes are bound in conſcience towards God will wholy be neglected, for which cauſe greater judgments will ſeaze upon them.

But to prevent all thoſe evill, the eſtabliſhment of Religion in Germany, by the compoſure of Eccleſiaſticall differences, will be a meanes uſefull and ſufficient.

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# AN INFORMATION CONCERNING *the meanes of Peace Eccleſiaſticall.*

*Matth.* 5. 9.

Bleſſed are the peace makers; For they shall be called the children of God.

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# AN INFORMATION CONCERNING

## *the meanes of Peace Eccleſiaſticall.*

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*Right Honourable,*

SEeing you have beene pleaſed not onely to take notice of theſe meane endeavours of *Eccleſiaſticall Pacification*, which I have proſecuted, but alſo to offer your favotable aſſiſtance in furthering the ſame to an hopefull iſſue. I acknowledge my ſelfe bound to give thankes unto God on your behalf, and to ſatisfie all your deſires, concerning my purpoſe in following out (as it ſhall pleaſe God to inable mee, theſe intentions: that both your Lordſhip and ſuch others, as you ſhall oblige the cooperate towards the furtherance of

of this cauſe, may by this brief information know how and what to undertake, in joyning profitably through the *Communion of Saints*, the fruits of their ſpirituallg uifts towards the raiſing up of this *Tabernacle* of holy concord amongſt Proteſtants.

The things which are already knowne toyour Honour, either by the Latine narrative, or by others writes and circumſtances of our converſations together, I will not touch, onely that which is moſt materiall to bee conſidered by all, that from their heart ſeeke the advancement of the Goſpel of truth and peace in theſe our dayes, I ſhall God willing here mention, in ſhewing. Three points, to which the ſame of all thoughts and endeavours in this nature may be referred.

The firſt is concerning the neceſſity of a common fundamentall confeſſion of faith amongſt thoſe Chriſtians that receive the holy Scriptures, as the onely rule of faith and practiſe, and in the Scriptures have the ſame apprehenſion and conception of the tenor of God Evangelicall covenant in Chriſt.

The ſecond is concerning the poſſibility of framing ſuch a *Confeſsion of Faith*, which infallibly ſhall be approved (by Gods grace) by all thoſe that agree in theſe two forenamed principles.

The third is concerning the manner of introducing this confeſſion amongſt them, that it may bee a meanes of ſpirituall peace and unity, in compoſing all *Schiſmaticall differences* and ſcandall.

To theſe three heads, all meditations tending to ripen theſe counſells, and all enterpriſes tending to worke out effects

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effects of the same, may be reduced. And it appeareth by all three, that one position is laid as the ground worke of of all this negotiation, which is this.

That the onely meanes to reunite divided Protestants, and knit their Churches together in a bond of brotherly love, is, to bring them to make publicque profession of one, and the same confession of faith in respect of fundamentalls. For I find it to be agreed upon and yeilded on all sides.

That if the *fundamentall truths* of faith, and practise bee acknowledged and professed by two Churches, that those Churches ought for this cause to professe sisterly love one towards anothers, and that they ought not for some differences in things not fundamentall, to breake the unity of the spirit, through unprofitable debatements. For seeing we are expressely commanded to endeavour to *keepe the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, Ephes. 4.3.*

Therefore it plainly followeth, that it is not lawfull to be at strife and variance for matters, which by the property of their nature inferre not a division of the spirit. Now it is certein, that no diversity of opinions in things extrafundamentall, by which the truth of faith, hope, and charity is not overthrowne in a mans heart, can by the property of its nature inferre such a division.

And therefore for such a diversity of opinions, peace and brotherly love ought not to bee violated. Now if it could bee made plaine to the *divided Protestant* Churches, That indeed the causes of their divisions are extrafundamentall, it may be truly and hopefully concluded, that for conscience sake towards God, and for their mutuall edifi-

cation and preſervation againſt the incroaching power of darkeneſſe, they would bee moved to leave off paſſionate diſputations, and laying aſide the cauſes of their ſeparation, to compoſe their difference in brotherly love.

But here now lyeth the greateſt difficulty of this whole worke, how to make this matter plaine unto them: for all parties ſtand upon their owne juſtification, and to make their cauſe good, they will readily cenſure and condemne others highly, and leaſt they ſhould ſeeme to contend ſo earneſtly without a ſufficient cauſe, they fall commonly to mainteine that the adverſe partie runneth into *fundamentall errors*, from whence they pretend to ſhew, that the cauſe of their diviſion is a fundamentall neceſſity.

Thus while every one doth juſtifie his owne ſeparation from others,& that by upbraiding of errors contrafundamentall, from hence ariſeth the difficulty, whereof I ſpoke even now, that it is very hard to make it plaine unto the divided Churches, that the true cauſes of their diviſions are *extrafundamentall*, for if you will go directly to worke and meinteine this poſition, you enter into a *Labyrinth of contradictions*, and ſhall have to do with every *Ringleader* of a partie, and with all ſhall bee driven to debate more about errors and offences, then about truths and holy duties, which is a worke in this negotiation mainly unprofitable.

And if you do not mainteine the poſition, but labour to make men peaceable by Paræneticall diſcourſe, you looſe your labour. For a good conſcience will not permit a man to profeſſe himſelfe a brother to him, whome he thinketh

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to remaine ſtubbornly in a *fundamentall error*, neither can the affections of union ſpring up in the heart of him, whoſe underſtanding is fully infected with the root of ſeparation.

Now the worke of ſeparation is nothing elſe, but this opinion which one partie taketh up againſt another, that it lyeth in fundamentall errors. And to root out this weed from mens underſtandings, we muſt not proceed *per regulam falſi*, in ſearching out of errors of all ſides, to demonſtrate them not to be fundamentall.

But becauſe *veritas eſt norma ſui & obliqui*, wee muſt drawe mens thoughts, and conſcience to reflect with a ſingle eye upon truths fundamentall, that after wee have comprehended all things neceſſary for ſalvation in our mindes, then we may be brought to ſee, that wee ought to behave our ſelves as brethren towards all ſuch as have the ſame feeling with us in theſe things.

So then wee ſee by this, how in the worke of pacification, and whereof it is neceſſary to ſearch out fundamentall truths, and to have the ſame brought into a forme of a confeſſion, that in it, the unity of the ſpirit being ſealed up, the conſciences of all men that tremble at the word of God, may find themſelves obliged to *keepe it ſtedfaſtly in the bond of peace.*

This neceſſity of a fundamentall confeſſion, is in this caſe of pacification, ſo abſolutly great, that I feare not to affirme, that without ſuch a confeſſion, it is impoſſible to reunite the divided ſpirits, and through it there is no doubt but all the godly, may be eaſily reunited, & the ungodly children of ſtriſe, ſo for repreſſed, that they ſhall not

be able to cloake anylonger their ſelfe willed factionſneſſe, with imputation of *fundamentall errors* againſt their ſuppoſed adverſaries.

But beſides this argument of the neceſſity of a fundamentall confeſſion of faith amongſt Proteſtants, there bee many others of great weight and importance, whereof we purpoſe to touch briefly the ſummary heads, that all ſuch as ſeeke the building up of the myſticall body of Jeſus Chriſt, and that wiſh for the gathering of the Saints in the unity of faith and knowledge of the ſonne of God, by the faithfull diſcharge of the worke of the Miniſtery, may be ſtirred up in the feare of God, to contribute their talents to further this effect.

Here then the neceſſity of bringing *A fundamentall confeſsion* to paſſe, may be ſeene either in reſpect of Chriſtianity it ſelfe, or in reſpect of the Proteſtant Churches jointly, or in reſpect of every particular Church ſeverally, or in reſpect of the Miniſteriall duties to be diſcharged in every Church, or laſtly in reſpect of every particular perſon, who hath a care of his eternall ſalvation

Now if it bee found neceſſary for the good of all theſe. Who is the man that would not helpe to bring it to light? I ſay firſt that it is neceſſary for the ſtate of Chriſtianity, that *Jewes, Turkes, and Heathens*, (for who knoweth how neere the day of their viſitation may bee) may have a true ſume of Chriſtianity to know what it is.

For ſo long as ſuch a common *Confeſsion* is wanting, it cannot be poſſibly known to them, but readily they eſteeme all Chriſtianity by the apprehenſion which they have of ſuch which are no Chriſtians indeed, but in name. Therefore

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fore not to ſuffer this aſperſion to lye upon Chriſtianity, ſuch a *fundamentall Confeſsion* is neceſſary.

And moreover it is neceſſary for ſuch as have to deale with *Jewes*, *Turkes*, and *Heathens* in reſpect of Religion. For if either they be put to the defenſe of their owne faith, and profeſſion, or if they have occaſion to informe thoſe that are not yet called to the name of Chriſt (if perhaps God might convert them) how ſhall they bee able to performe underſtandingly either the one or the other, ſo that they ſhall not contradict any that may come after them to deale with the ſame perſons, in the ſame nature, except they know what the common undeniable *fundamentalls* are, wherein all Chriſtians agree.

If they know this, then they go ſafely to worke, but if they know it not, they can neither defend, nor teach Chriſtianity rightly. Therefore in this reſpect it is neceſſary. As for the ſtate of Proteſtant Churches joyntly taken, whether you conſider them in reſpect of their enemies the *Papiſts*, or of their halfe friends the Grecians, or of themſelves one towards another.

This is every way abſolutely neceſſary, both for the full diſcovery and overthrow of the man of ſinne, and for the gaining of the remnant of Gods Elect out of Babylon, in a publicke way, and for the confirming and perfecting of the foundation laid, or left amongſt the Grecians, and laſtly for the preſervation and edification of one Proteſtant Church towards another, which for want of this, are now come to ſtudie one anothers overthrow, to eat up and perſecute one another.

So that undoubtedly the judgement will come to the

 height

height, except by this meanes the Lord will bee pleased to prevent it. A man might write a volume of the necessity of a *fundamentall Confession* in this respect, but because to all judicious men, the case is out of doubt, therefore I will speake no more of it.

As for the state of every particular Church by it self, the matter may not seeme very necessary, seeing every Church hath its owne Confession for it selfe, wherein it supposeth to have all the fundamentalls sufficiently exposed, and therefore may think it needlesse, at least not necessary to proceed further for matters fundamentall.

But this is a great cause of our inevitable misery, and of these infinite divisions and subdivisions in all Churches. That the *Confessions* which at first were put forth as testimonies against Papistry, are now either rashly contradicted misinterpreted, and called in question by some, or els too highly urged and pressed upon men by others, as if the tenor of all their Articles were infaillibly *fundamentall truths*.

The disabuse of all *Confessions* which troubleth more or lesse every Church, maketh one truly fundamentall & infallible *Confession* to be necessary to them all, to avoid the ruine, which threatneth every one of them. For to any judicious man, that can discerne the state of particular Churches, and how one particular *Confession* is become a stone of offence, either by away of opposition, or els by way of comparison unto another, and how every *Confession* (though true and good) is nevertheless too weak to keep unity in the spirits of those children which it hath begotten, can without much discourse perceive, that both to take away

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away their oppoſition and compariſons, and to ſtrengthen their weakneſſes, a common *fundamentall Confeſsion*, which will be the infallible truth of God, and a true root of them all, muſt be propoſed that they may ſee that they are all like different branches ſpringing through one tree, from the ſame root of life.

So then to this effect alſo, ſuch a Confeſſion is neceſſary. As for diſcharging of Miniſteriall duties, whether they be preaching or praying, exhorting or reprooving, comforting or threatning, inſtructing or correcting, nay meditating or writting. All this is done with ſo little fruit, and effect (as alas) may be ſeene every where.

All this is done in many places with offence and diſtractions of the hearers faith, chiefly for want of an infallible rule and *fundamentall undoubted principles*, from whence, and by which all particular duties in this nature might bee ſquared, and all concluſions and expoſitions might bee inferred, and made cleere to a Chriſtian conſcience.

Now this rule and theſe principles may be had in a *fundamentall Confeſſion*, which for this reſpect is as neceſſary as for any other hitherto named. For from this defect in matters belonging to miniſteriall duties all other inconveniences hitherto named originally flowers, Therefore the remedying of this, is the help of all the reſt. And I ſee not how it can bee done without a *fundamentall Confeſſion*.

Laſtly a *fundamentall Confeſſion* is neceſſary for every particular man, that would bee ſure of the knowledge neceſſary to ſalvation. To demonſtrate this, what is it needfull? Is it not as cleare as the Sun at none day.

That

That by reaſon of the endleſſe doubts and diſtractions of theſe Schoole termes, foiſted into divinity, and of the bitterneſſe and malice of parties in maintaining their own, & traducing their adverſe parties tenets, that the ſimple plaine man, is in a thowſand perplexities and laberynths, if he be zealous to ſearch for knowledge, and if he bee not zealous, muſt needs remaine in unſetled ignorance.

And that the worldly wiſe man, either denieth all Religion, & becommeth an Antheiſt, or elſe ſetleth it in the tenor of ſome certeine opinions, and in the formality of ſome outward worſhip. And that even the Schollers and men of learning themſelves, are wrapped into inextricable confuſions in their differences, and know not how to right themſelves to their owne or other mens edification.

And all this befalleth unto all theſe, onely for want of a fundamentall Confeſſion, whereby to rule and principle themſelves and others in their actions, and in their meditations. This defect in this reſpect cannot bee ſufficiently deſcribed nor lamented, and therefore I will leave it to the more inward and ſerious thoughs of the godly wiſe who ſeeleth not himſelf, but as Chriſt did, the good of many for their edification.

Thus is the neceſſity of a fundamentall Confeſſion, as touching the poſſibility of framing the ſame, ſo that it ſhall bee infallibly received by all thoſe that acknowledge the holy Scripture, to be the only rule of Faith and obedience, and take the ſcope of the Scripture (the covenant of God in Chriſt) in the ſame ſenſe. I will brefly ſet downe my conception.

Firſt then I ſuppoſe, that all ſuch as have the ſame principles

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ciples of the Scripture, and of the Covenant, may be eafily brought together or els to admit of the ſame concluſions, which are inſeparably or fundamentally dependant from thoſe principles, if their mindes be not foreſtalled with a preconceived thought and paſſion, or if they follow the right method of ſcripturall and ſpirituall meditations to cleere their doubts when they doe ariſe.

Secondly, I ſuppoſe that two, three or more men ſpiritually affected and void of partiality may agree together to ſet upon this worke of framing a fundamentall confeſſion.

Thirdly, I ſuppoſe that they may know the right method of doing it, and following the ſame without wavering, All theſe things are not impoſſible. But yet in all this, there is as yet no evidence of poſſibility how to performe the worke, and to performe it ſo, that no man ſhall be able to find fault with it, who admitteth the truth acknowledged amongſt Proteſtants, concerning the Scriptures, and the Covenant of the Goſpell.

Now then to come to the manner of proceeding in this worke, I think that all places of Scripture chiefly in the *new Teſtament*, which ſpeake of the Covenant of God ſhould bee gathered together, and by the way of a moſt plaine *Analyſis* reduced to ſimple *Axioms* in ſuch a forme as I have given your Lordſhip an example.

When this is done, let them obſerve all the different matters which are mentioned in all thoſe places, and let every matter be noted diſtinctly by it ſelfe, for it is to bee come a cheife head of ſome *fundamentall truth* afterwards. The matters thus diſtinctly noted, muſt bee afterwards

conferred together, that their ſubordination and cohærence one with another may be conceived.

If this be rightly performed, as eaſily it may bee done. Then if not the whole, at the leaſt the chief matter and the order of the parts of the fundamentall Confeſſion is found out from the Scripture it ſelf without any addition, ſo that no true Chriſtian can bee able to except any thing againſt it.

This being effected, then every particular matter, and cheife head is to bee enlarged juſt in the ſame faſhion, as this forenamed matter of the Covenant was inlarged, by collecting all places that ſpeaks of it, by Analyſing the ſame, into ſingle Axioms, and by conferring the Axioms together to ſet them in their due ſubordination.

For here perhaps it will not be needfull, to note againe every particular matter, by it ſelf, to become a cheif head of another enlargement, becauſe after the firſt amplification, the truths which may be ſuperadded, will not all bee fundamentall and abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation to bee expreſſely known or firmely conceived. But if a man will amplifie matters the ſecond, third, and fourth time by this ſame method, taking alwaies one thing out of the boſome of another, he may doe it for his own and others edification, and will perceive the degrees of ſpirituall truths, how that one ariſeth from another.

Which truths, although they will all be truly infallible, yet they muſt not all bee eſteemed fundamentally neceſſary for ſalvation, ſo that without the knowledge of the ſame, a man doth faile in the ſubſtance of the new Covenant, but yet cheifly the ſecond and third amplification.

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they will all be saving truths and principles of large extent for knowledge and practise.

Now when the first amplification of the matter is performed, if a man would be sure to have omitted no doctrine or matter necessiary for salvation, let him seeke out, and call to mind all the places of Scripture which have a marke of necessity, or a speciall promise of salvation annexed expressely unto them.

These places must bee in like manner *Analysed* into simple propositions, and if you think good, their matters may be inlarged, as the former matters were. These matters if they bee different from these of the Covenant, may be set by themselves in their severall subordinations.

If men that are in different places, have the same scripturall booke of concordance (for nothing else, but the *originall Text* and a faithfull Dictionary to know the true property of every words, is requisite to go about this work) and follow punctualiy this method, they cannot almost faile to make the same fundamentall Confession word by word, perhaps the order of the matters may differ, but all the truths will be verbatrim, the very same positions.

Now what every man of Judgement in following Scriptures would doe, if hee were to make a fundamentall Confession for himselfe, he will never reject, when he shall find it done by another, this then is the possibility of forming such a Confession, as will rectifie all our confusions, and of framing it so, that it will bee altogether without exception.

Neither can any insufficiency be alledged against it, for which in times to come, it can bee found unfit to de-

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termine matters of doubt, whether in point of knowledge, or of practise if it bee rightly applyed to the case (which cometh in question) without partiality. When the *Confession* is thus framed, it will bee easie to demonstrate, that every article of it is absolutely necessary for salvation, either to be beleved and knowne, or else practised, for it will conteine all the fundamentalls, and little or nothing more then the fundamentalls of both. And to build upon this foundation, there is nothing more requisite, then to meditate and Analize diligently the Scriptures. Thus then the Confession is framed.

Now to speak of the introducing of it into all Churches, I think it not very needfull, because we are not yet come so far in the worke, yet because it may bee profitable to give men well affected to the publike good occasion to thinke upon this also, I will open my self herein as in the former matters. Thus then I do conceive.

That because all the positions of such a confession wilbe undeniable that it cannot be rejected by any, but being proposed, it will be received cheifly if men be informed of the maner, how themselves may make the very same *Confession* from the Scriptures. If men make a scrupule of the sufficiency of it to rectifie mens judgements in matters of doctrine or action.

Then the use of it must bee made plaine, and a method shewed, how it should bee applyed to all cases of doubts, and how with it, the method of simple Analysis of the Scriptures may and ought to concurre, when doubts are extrafundamentall which things, being as plainly shewed, as this former hath beene, and being found as evidently infallible

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as this is (becauſe theſe latter manners of proceedings in application of the Confeſſion, to reſolve doubts, or in *Analyſing the Scriptures* to the ſame effect, differeth nothing from the way, which is uſed in the very framing of the fundamentall Confeſſion, no man of any conſcience will be able to refuſe.

This ſheweth the probabilitie, that the Confeſſion being propoſed, may and will bee received. But much lyeth in the firſt hint or manner of propoſing every thing, neither is this in any mans hand, but in Gods will, who hath the time and ſeaſons of all occurrances, and the fit occaſions of all actions in his owne diſpoſing, and according as men are acquainted with the courſe of Gods dealing, or are capable to obſerve his counſell, by reaſon of ſome intimacy with his intentions, ſo they get hintes or opportunities to doe ſome part of his worke, in that whereunto he hath inableth them.

As forme I have been hitherto as it were knocking at the doore of an holy communion and correſpondancy about this buſineſſe, but by reaſons of the tumults of wars and outward diſtractions of mens mindes that looke no further then the appearance of things, not being able to penetrate into Gods Counſells and way of propagating his Goſpell, and by reaſon of mine owne bodily and ſpirituall wants and inſufficiences which are yet lying heavy upon me!, and by reaſon of ſpirituall clamours and complaints, partly over injuries, vexations, oppreſſions, and tyrannicall perſecutions of mens conſciences, partly over rebellions, ſelfe willed conceitedneſſe, and ſcandalous practiſes, which riſe upon all ſides, my weake voyce

hath not hitherto beene heard, becauſe Gods time was not yet come to open mens hearts to conſider the matters of the vniverſall good of all the Churches.

And becauſe we find by experience, that even the beſt and moſt ſpiritnall men in theſe dayes are either disheartned from publique endeavours through their own feare-fulneſſe, or beaten off through authority, or ſtopped in the undertaking and agitating of matters belonging to Chriſtianity, (abſolutely conſidered in it ſelf, as it may be equally profitable to all divided parties) by reaſon of a ſecret particularity and love to their owne partie, for the mainteining and propagating of which they bend all their thoughts, ſo that they can find no time to think upon any other matters of ſo large an extent, as may reach to the good of all.

But if the more underſtanding ſert of our beſt men now a daies would conſider, that God would have the members of Chriſts myſticall body to grow as the members of a naturall body uſe to do, that is altogether, all alike in their proportion, and all one by and through one another, perhaps they would have more univerſall thoughts, and mind things eſſentiall in the Goſpell more applicable to the good of all ſides, then now they doe, whileſt in in a zeale for Religion and truth, they mind more the good of one, then all.

Now it is cleere unto mee, that God will not have any Church to come unto perfection without the reſt. For ever as he would not have the auncients *who received a good report. Hebr. 11.* to come unto perfection without another, or all without our poſterities.

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This being truly apprehended by ſuch as have univerſall guifts, and a ſpirit to conceive of the publique good of many, may bee a meanes to further the correſpondencie, which all this while I have been ſuing for in ſpirituall matters, and to ripen the fruits of that ſeed, which is already, or may be ſowen hereafter in a holy communion of Religious duties ſetled towards the proſecuting of true peace, or peace in truth, according to theſe principles.

For indeed all that I have beene doing hitherto in all parts, is nothing elſe, but the ſowing of theſe principles and ſuch like as I have propoſed to thoſe of Uppſall, What fruit, where, and what it will ſpring up, God onely doth know, neither have I any other care or policie, but to ſee and ſtand upon my watch, and to know what opportunities of holy Communion, God doth offer in this nature unto me.

For I know that the *Communion of Saints* (beleeved in the Creed verbally by many, but practiſed in effect by very few) amongſt men, that have a ſpeciall care to deny themſelves as well in ſpiritual as in temporal things of a preſent nature, is the only inſtrument which God doth make uſe of, to build up his Church, and by meanes contemptible to the world to worke great effects.

So then in this your Lordſhip doth ſee all my way and pollicie, both *Theorie and practiſe* in this worke, which in a word is nothing elſe, but a ſollicitation (private or publique as it faileth out) of a godly communication of counſells and endeavours among the learned of this age, for ſpirituall peace and amitie to be procured by a fundamentall

agreement

agreement in matters belonging to knowledge or practise according to the Scriptures.

Therefore, if your Lordship by the addresse of Gods providence, doth light upon any fit man, able and willing to correspond with mee in this nature, I intreat you to give them information of that which you know, concerning my proceedings. And if it be found expedient, I would wish to heare in due time from them, to bee participant of the fruits of grace which Gods spirit will poure upon them, for the good of the commonwealth of Israel.

I need not mention what an entry and progresse God hath given here unto mee, and what (if his blessing continue) the issue may bee if it be lawfull for us, in these matters to make rationall conjectures; your Lordship knoweth all the particulars which I can say in this behalfe, onely one thing I will mention, concerning my purpose of introducing the forenamed *fundamentall Confession* into all the Churches, and therewith make an end, and that is this.

If it please God to dispose so of the issue of my treatise with the divines of Sweden, that I may reach the effect intended. Then my thought is to propose the matter to the chiefest worthies in other Churches as God shall open a dore, and after the chief worthies (if God permit) I conceive it might bee brought to the Universities, and from the Univetsities to greater, either ordinary, or as it may fall out, either for this or other causes, extraordinary meetings.

This is but spoken at adventure to intimate the way of proposing and introducing the fundamentall Confession,

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by degrees: And this may be done with greater ſpeed and facility then men are aware of, if it pleaſe God to bring once the matter to this period, that nothing is to bee thought upon, but to make this propoſal: Yet I loue not to ſet my reſolutions upon ſuch probable conjectures: I loue not to leaue Gods worke, but rather to be lead in it, as he thinkes good, he knoweth where the firſt fruit of this ſowing ſhall ſpring vp, he hath prepared of old all the workemen fit for this huſbandry, and he hath them in readineſſe.

What preſumption were it then for us, to ſeeme to preſcribe any thing to his counſell, and to prædetermine to our ſelues either the iſſue, or the particular way of driving forward his worke: I am falne lately in loue with this opinion.

That it is very good for us in matters of duty towards God, and cheifly in this worke, to ſee no poſſibility in reſpect of men and outward meanes to effect it. Many reaſons might be alledghed to ſhew why this is very good, but one that pleaſeth me much is this. Becauſe that I ſuppoſe him to be no true ſervant of God (and ſo indeed not fit to joyne unto this worke) that will not undergoe a matter of dutie, without the foreſight of the iſſue, hee that will not looſe his labour for Gods ſake, nay and be ill rewarded for his paines, hee is unworthy to imployed in his ſeruice and honeſt men that minde Gods cauſe without any reſpect but becauſe it is his wil & cauſe, are well rid of ſuch company, not but all in their owne lawfull way and degree, in ſome things may be made vſe of, but all the ſecrets of mens reſolutions muſt not be concredited, except they be known

to have both the faith and true obedience of our Lord Iesus Christ without partiality, that is, without minding themselues, or their owne plots, and minding onely Gods will, and all Gods wil and to wards all Gods children and that upon all occasions, without much demurring and præconjectures.

To men of this disposition that you shall meet withall: I pray your Lordshippe to have me and this worke recommended, that I may be remembred by them before the thron of grace, & that I may be participant of the thoughts which the spirit of grace shall put in their minde for the setting forward of these endeavours.

With such J desire to entertaine correspondency, and to such, I offer my selfe as a faithfull servant of the communication of saints in Iesus Christ, to whose favour, loue, and safeguard I commend both them and your selfe in all your waies, as being

Your Honours

*Ianuary*: 24: 1637.

Most humble and dutifull servant in Christ.